The Cheerful Letter

Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of God.—James Freeman Clarke.

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THE FIRST CHRISTMAS

"And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this is the sign unto you: Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, good-will toward men.

"And it came to pass, when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us. And they came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger. And when they saw it, they made known concerning the saying which was spoken to them about this child. And all that heard it wondered at the things which were spoken unto them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, even as it was spoken unto them."—Luke 2:8-20.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from henceforth even for ever."—Isa. 9: 6, 7.

JESUS CHRIST THE BROTHER, FRIEND, AND SAVIOUR

Christmas has come once more,—the day devoted by the large majority of Christians to the commemoration of the Nativity of the Saviour. In both hemispheres of our globe, and almost from pole to pole, the voice of thanksgiving today is lifted up for the coming of Christ into the world.

It is a ground of great joy, I think, that we have a Saviour who was *born* to us; that is, a Saviour who appeared in *our own nature.*

Jesus, by his birth, was truly a *human being;* and in this we should rejoice. He was flesh of our flesh. He had our wants and desires, our hunger and thirst, our sensations of pleasure and pain, our natural passions. He was born of woman, was folded in a mother's arms, was nourished from a mother's breast; and he felt the gratitude, the tenderness of a son. He bore the relations of human life towards kindred, neighbors, and friends. He grew up amidst the labors of mortal men, ate the bread of his own earnings, and was acquainted by experience with the hardships

to which the multitude of mankind are exposed. He was thus actually one of our race, a brother of the great human family . . .

In the next place, let us rejoice that the birth of Jesus was so *humble* . . .

I rejoice in the clouds which gathered early and continually thickened around the outward lot of Jesus, because the light within him broke through and changed them into resplendent glory. Our great privilege as Christians is that we know the mind and character of Jesus, and these were brought out by the condition in which he was placed. How often great virtue is hidden, how often great power slumbers, for want of an appropriate sphere, for want of the trials by which alone true greatness can be revealed! . . .

I rejoice in his birth chiefly because he came to reveal by his suffering his celestial love,—to lay open to us his soul, and thus to regenerate the human soul. To regenerate and exalt human souls was Christ's ultimate end. This seems to me more and more to be the great good which we derive from the birth of Jesus. His inmost spirit was thus laid open to us. Nothing has wrought so powerfully on the human soul as the mind and character of Jesus Christ. Among all means of civilization and improvement, I can find nothing to be compared in energy with this. The great impulse which is to carry forward the human race is the character of Jesus understood ever more clearly and ever more deeply felt . . .

Thus was he revealed as the express image of divine perfection.

Jesus came, not only to liberate the intellect, the conscience, and the energy of love: he came to bring a yet nobler salvation, by delivering the soul from the enthralling sway of creation, and lifting it into communion with the Creator . . . What liberty does that spirit gain, which, breaking away from all illusions of inferior good, gives itself freely up in veneration, confidence and grateful joy to the Infinite Father, in whose perfect character, purposes and works it finds an everlasting range for its noblest faculties, an ever-unfolding object of its loftiest love.

Jesus came to set free the indomitable principle of hope, which soars forever forward, on unresting pinions, out of each human heart. To all the unexplored future open vistas, where fairest prospects bloom and unfading joys bid welcome. But hope, if confined to this world, feels itself a prisoner. Its flights stop suddenly at the grave. And the inpenetrable background that arrests it is an awful gloom. Now, Jesus came to dispel that darkness, and to unveil before hope interminable regions of ever-brightening splendor. What a salvation, priceless beyond conception, is it to be delivered from all fear of death; to be at liberty, to expatiate through endless ages in expectant hope; to be assured that our highest attainments here are but the beginning of our everlasting progress, and that there is no height of intelligence, power, beneficence and bliss to which we are not destined to ascend! Jesus came, he lived, he died, to give to us the universe, and the God of the universe, by bringing our spirits into harmony with both,—by breathing into us, in so far as we are receptive, the spirit, wisdom, love and holiness, the perfect joy and peace of our heavenly Father. Receive, honor, follow, love, this blessed Saviour! Carry into life his principles. Confide in his promises, till they transform you into the Divine Image, and give you in this world the pledge and foretaste of the world to come.

Compassionate Saviour! We welcome thee to our world. We welcome thee to our hearts. We bless thee for the divine goodness thou has brought from heaven; for the soul thou hast warmed with love to man, and lifted up in love to God; for the efforts of divine philanthropy which thou has inspired; and for that hope of a pure, celestial life, through which thy disciples triumph over death.—*W. E. Channing.*

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

"What means this glory round our feet,"
The Magi mused, "more bright than morn?"
And voices chanted clear and sweet,
"Today the Prince of Peace is born."

"What means that star?" the shepherds said,
"That brightens through the rocky glen?"
And angels, answering overhead,
Sang, "Peace on earth, good will to men."

'Tis eighteen hundred years and more
Since those sweet oracles were dumb:
We wait for him like those of yore.
Alas, he seems so slow to come!

But it was said, in words of gold
No time nor sorrow e'er shall dim,
That little children might be bold
In perfect trust to come to him.

All around about our feet shall shine
A light like that the wise men saw,
If we our loving wills incline
To that sweet Life which is the Law.

So shall we learn to understand
The simple faith of shepherds then,
And, kindly clasping hand in hand
Sing, "Peace on earth, good will to men!"

For they who to their childhood cling,
And keep their natures fresh as morn,
Once more shall hear the angels sing,
"Today the Prince of Peace is born."

—*James Russell Lowell.*

CHILD MUST HAVE GOOD LUNCHEON

A housewife who has to put up three lunches every morning for three children insists that this is the hardest thing about keeping house. It seems to her as if housework would be a pleasure were it not for those lunches.

Doubtless the thing that makes them hardest is that they must be prepared in the early morning when there usually is enough to do simply in preparing the breakfast. To be sure, some housewives simplify the task by putting them up the night before, insisting that if the sandwiches are wrapped in waxed paper and placed in the refrigerator they will be quite fresh the next day. But there is much difference in flavor and freshness between a last night's lunch and one of this morning's.

Even though you do not actually make the sandwiches the night before you may very easily get some of the things ready. It is well to get into the habit when you first go down to prepare breakfast to take as much butter as you think you will need for the sandwiches and set it out so that it will warm enough to spread easily when you want it. Bread should be freshly cut, buttered and filled at once and then wrapped securely in waxed paper.

A wide variety of sandwiches may be made from egg. One of the easiest is made by letting the eggs boil very hard, then peeling and cutting up fine and then spreading on buttered slices of bread. Some people like a fried egg sandwich. Egg with mayonnaise is delicious.

Waxed paper is so inexpensive that you have little reason not to be fairly generous with it. It is a good plan to place each sandwich in a separate piece of waxed paper and other things, like cake and deviled eggs, should likewise each have their individual piece of waxed paper.

The young business girl who carries a mid-day snack to save the cost of buying luncheon at a restaurant or cafeteria usually wants to have her lunch package well disguised and as small as possible. Fortunately most school children have no such prejudices and there is no reason why you should not provide a lunch box that is large enough to hold a variety of good things in convenient containers. To protect the luncheon and to keep the things from crushing it is a good plan to line the box or basket with a substantial cotton or linen lunch napkin, providing a paper napkin or two every day for actual use. Then as part of your packing equipment you should buy some waxed paper cups with closely fitting pasteboard tops in which to put soft foods, such as salad mixtures, custard, cut-up fruit, rice pudding or something of the sort. In cold weather even gelatine preparations—such as jellied tomato or bouillon or jellied fruit desserts—may be included in the lunch when these tightly closed containers are used.

Without much trouble one may contrive always to have some addition to the school luncheon in the way of a surprise. This may consist of a few candies wrapped in a piece of waxed paper, a few salted or shelled nuts, a lollypop, some milk chocolate or even an unexpected 5-cent piece with a little note to explain that it is to be spent for some specially liked candy or baker's cake on the way home from school.

Always if possible the school luncheon should contain some sort of fruit—an apple, a banana, an orange, a pear, a bunch of grapes.—*Selected.*

FOR HAPPY HOUSES

When we go romping home from school,
No matter if it isn't far,
We're hungry, and we hurry in
And someone pounces with a grin
On crunchy cookies in the jar.
Aren't cooky jars the nicest things?
Sometimes it's raisin cookies there,
Or else it's doughnuts, crisp and round;
To-day some gingersnaps we found,
When we were hungry as a bear.
Aren't mothers just the nicest things?
They're waiting—mothers always are!
When children hurry in from school;
For happy houses, here's a rule:
A mother and a cooky jar!

—*Marjorie Dillon.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. J. A. McCaddin, 21 Ashfield St., Roslindale, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card asking *"Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. McCaddin, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send those to the Book Club to be printed here.

SPECIAL NOTICES

It will greatly aid those who are sending books, magazines, cards, and so forth, if all our correspondents who send requests for their children will take pains to mention their names and ages. Lacking such information, one is likely to make mistakes; for a boy of twelve and a girl of seven are not usually interested in the same things.

When writing to the Exchange for the first time, correspondents should always give, as reference, the name and address of their clergyman.

When correspondents move to a new address, notice should be sent either to our headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., or to those persons who have been sending books and magazines.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word. We do not undertake to send correspondents money, clothing or household goods. Letters asking for that sort of assistance cannot receive attention. Letters not signed cannot be printed.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

Those who enjoy receiving books and magazines are asked to remember that they, in their turn, can give much pleasure if they will take pains to write to the persons who send such reading matter. In cases where no word of response goes back—not even to say that the books or magazines were received—senders may suppose the parcels were not welcome. Let us each do our share.

APPEALS

1. It has been such a long time since I received any cheer from the dear friends. I thought I would write again and ask to be remembered during the long winter days. I would like pieces for my quilts, also thread of any kind, and if not asking too much, I would like good reading. Please don't forget me at Christmas time. Mrs. W. R. Eanes, Route 2, Bassett, Va.

2. Mrs. Walter R. May, Peach Bottom, Pa., sends thanks to all CHEERFUL LETTER friends for their kindness to her family. As she will not be able to buy books or toys at Christmas time she hopes someone will keep them in mind.

3. Mrs. Ann Carter, Route 4, Chillicothe, Tex., wishes to thank those who remembered her in the past. She says times are very blue with her and very lonesome and any kind of cheer would be most welcome. Her little girl is 4 years old.

4. Will you please print a few lines for me in your precious little paper, writes Mrs. T. A. Campbell, Route 2, Box 7, Crumpler, N. C.? This is the way I am thanking each one who has written or sent me packages in the past. We certainly have enjoyed your thoughtfulness very much. Also my thanks go to the one who sends me the CHEERFUL LETTER magazine. Why I have been silent so long is on account of my mother who has been very ill. Now she has gone to her reward leaving us sad and lonely. Cheer at this time would be appreciated and my little girls hope to be remembered at Christmas time.

5. I have changed my address from Othello to Lansing, N. C. I would enjoy reading matter, quilt pieces and sewing for myself and something to amuse a little 3 year old girl. I am not very strong and live in a rented house. I get so lonely at times. Mrs. Essie Eldreth, Lansing, N. C.

6. During the winter months, I hope the CHEERFUL LETTER friends will not forget us. Our home has been saddened by the loss of our dear grandmother whom we loved so much; but the Lord loved her best. I now have five children, 2 boys and 3 girls, and

it would be nice if they could also be remembered. In closing, I want to say how grateful I am to the one who is sending me the little magazine every month. Mrs. J. O. Norwood, Route 1, Athens, Tenn.

7. Mrs. Jesse C. Broadaway, Route 2, Polkton, N. C., wonders if some of the friends will send some more reading and scraps. Her oldest boy has been in the hospital for two months and his condition has caused her much anxiety. Cheer is needed.

8. Will some one please send me the following magazines? "True Stories", "True Romances", and "McCalls." I sure would appreciate any of them and I could use some sewing material. My little girls are at school and I get awful lonesome by myself. The above would be a great pleasure to me. Thank you. Mrs. Albert Wann, Forreston, Tex.

9. We were in the awful 1930 drought and have been far behind ever since. It has rained continually on our tobacco crops, so we will be outside again. This is our means of income so we will not be able to have very much to make us comfortable during the winter months. Christmas cheer will mean a great deal to us again this year and I sincerely hope we will not be forgotten. I am very anxious for a photograph album, if anyone could send one, and some sewing material. The boys' ages are 9, 7, 4 and 1 and the two oldest go to school and would be interested in any kind of school material and the younger ones would like some playthings, something to take up their time while I am working. If we can be remembered during the holiday season, it will be appreciated more than words can tell. Our Christmas this year will depend upon interested friends. Mrs. Lelah Mabe, Lawsonville, N. C.

10. Elgin Roberson, Elamsville, Va., wants to thank the dear ones who sent him things the past year. He writes again for reading matter as he cannot attend school regularly. If some little boy has an erector set to spare, he would love to have it, and sends thanks in advance. His brother is 17 and Elgin is 14.

11. Just a few lines to tell the dear folks how thankful I am for past cheer. May God bless you all. My days would have been lonely and gloomy if you had not come into my life. Now, a long winter is ahead of us and I do hope some of the folks will send me some reading matter and sewing material. I don't have the means to buy these items, as we have made scarcely anything on our crops for two years. I have six children and cheer will be very helpful around Christmas time. Mrs. I. N. Haynes, Route 2, Bassetts, Va.

12. I am sending thanks to the CHEERFUL LETTER friends for remembering our family. I would be glad if the kind friends would remember my children at Christmas time. Here are their names and ages: Eldren, 13; Mae, 11; Russell, 9; Buren, 6; and baby Janie, 1. I would like some patchwork pieces. Thanking you all in advance, I am, Mrs. Elsie Jamison, Dodson, Va.

13. Mrs. Baxter Neaves, Jefferson, N. C., has not had a letter printed for a long while and hopes to see this one in print. So, here it is! She has been confined to her home on account of a new baby, born July 18. This last addition makes 7 children; four girls and 3 boys. She hopes someone will send her some quilt scraps, thread, and anything to interest the children. Mrs. Neaves likes to hear from the members.

14. My dear CHEERFUL LETTER friends, I will write you a few lines as I have not heard from any of you for a long, long time. I hope you have not forgotten me for I certainly remember how kind you have been to me in the past. Times are very hard in this part of the country and any kind of cheer helps a lot. My little boy is now 5 years old and my little girl, 3, and they would love some pictures or anything that would amuse them. I guess you know about my husband leaving me three years ago; I worry a sight about him. Mrs. Florence Shepherd, c/o Martin Ham, Comet, N. C.

15. Mrs. Carrie Parson, Jefferson, N. C., has been confined to her home all summer with neuritis in her arms. She is the mother of seven children, ages 5 months to 15. She would enjoy some reading and sewing material and thanks all who have written in the past.

16. I cannot express how kind you have all been to me in the past. It certainly means a great deal to me. I have been ill all summer, and my granddaughter kept me company until her school commenced. Now I am alone, except for a baby grandchild I have taken when my son's wife died eighteen months ago. We have long cold winters back here among the mountains and we are eighteen miles from railroad or town. I would appreciate some good reading material and any kind of sewing things. Little Celia, of course, would like some toys. Your little kindnesses mean everything to

me, please believe me. Mrs. Beulah Moore, Route 1, Lawsonville, N. C.

17. Mrs. Angie Banks, Athlone, N. C., writes, kind friends, it has been quite a while since I have written to the Exchange asking for reading matter for my son, who is 20 years old. He is very fond of western stories. For myself and mother, we would like some quilt scraps and thread. We are 58 and 78 years old. Our home is on a mountain and it gets real lonesome in the winter season.

18. I wish to thank all who sent me cheer. I meant to answer everyone personally but I got some of the addresses and names mixed so I don't know whether I did or not. I hope our family is remembered again this winter. My girls would appreciate bits of embroidery thread and stamped articles. Mrs. George R. Nolen, Ivy Depot, Va.

19. I have not lived at any one place very long. My husband had a bad nervous break down two years ago and was obliged to give up his work and stay in a hospital for several weeks. He is not able to do any work as yet and we have been staying with the children at his sister's, so you may have some idea of what I have been through. I have not told half of it and I have had so much trouble that I am almost a nervous wreck myself. My husband and I enjoy reading very much and I hope some of the ladies will send us some. In fact, any kind of cheer will be most welcome. Mrs. Joanna Crook, P. O. B. 742, Albemarle, N. C.

20. Miss Mattie E. Sale, Ronda, N. C., wants the "Junior Home Magazine." Perhaps someone will send it to her when they have finished. She says times are hard in the South and they are wishing for brighter, more prosperous days.

21. As I must be one of the long time members, am writing to give thanks for much kindness. I have not been able to walk since I was 14 years old and am 60 now. I joined the Exchange when I was 21. I have my mother still with me but helpless almost, and she enjoys kind letters or little sick room comforts; white cloth pieces help keep her well. I enjoy my stamp collecting and would like old or unusual stamps on or off envelopes. Alma Appleton Newcomb, South Brewer, Maine.

22. Mrs. Covie Nance, R. F. D. 2, Polkton, N. C., would enjoy some good reading; papers, magazines or books. She lives away out in the country and reading helps pass the time away. She has a boy, 19, and two girls, 17 and 15. She is thankful for past favors.

23. Will you please publish a few lines for me in the CHEERFUL LETTER magazine? I wish to thank all for the help and cheer that has been sent me. I am a poor crippled woman, having tuberculosis. I have two children, a girl 14 and a little weakly boy, 8. I would love to have some thread and mill ends, if anyone cares to remember me. Mrs. Ennis Parsons, Lansing, N. C.

24. Please accept my thanks, dear one, through the CHEERFUL LETTER for the cheer which you have sent me. Because I am in poor health I have not been able to acknowledge everything. My girls, ages 14 and 10 are in school and would enjoy any material in this line. They also love to read. My boy likes western stories and I could use some quilt scraps. Any kind of cheer is so helpful and please remember us at Christmas with some games and toys. I may never meet you dear people face to face but trust we will all join in that bright and happy place. Mrs. Emma E. Blankenship, Roanoke, Va.

THE TREE AND THE CANDLE

Said the little Christmas candle
To the little Christmas tree,
"We're both of us important
But of course you must agree
I'm twice as bright as you are,
And if it weren't for me
You'd never make a hit at all
In being a Christmas Tree!"
Said the tree then to the candle,
And his tone was most polite,
"Your gay illumination
Is particularly bright,
But allow me one small question
Which seems both fair and right—
Can you not see you're merely meant
To make me shine at night?"
The candle softly twinkled,
And then at last said she,
"I guess that I am here for you,
And you are here for me!"

—Martha B. Thomas.

Tom—"Why does a woman always keep a man waiting so long after she says she'll be ready in a minute?"

Tim—"Because she picks out a minute which is about half an hour away."—*Stray Stories.*

CHRISTMAS RICHES

"Ten dollars and forty-nine cents! No more money for a week! Only two days to Christmas!" Lisle Ross snapped her thin purse together and took another look at her check-book, although she knew her balance by heart. "Nine dollars and fifty cents." There was that quarterly insurance premium coming due the next week which would take the most of that amount, so she dared not draw against it.

A year ago she had not had to count the cost. She had spent lavishly for gifts to Frances, the younger sister whom she adored, who had married Richard Allen five years before, and was now "buried" in the country, as Lisle considered it, with her husband and two youngsters, Jean and Dicky. For the first time since Frances' marriage Lisle had stayed in town, to be entertained by Mansfield Proctor, a man much older than she, wealthy and devoted, and who for the past two years had been urging her to give up her business career and become his wife.

Lisle liked and respected Mansfield Proctor. The life of ease which he offered appealed to her strongly. She would have the means and leisure for travel, she would be able to enjoy the luxuries of life herself, and also to bring many extra comforts and pleasures to Frances and her little family. For Proctor was generous with his wealth. But Lisle did not love him, and she was honest enough to admit it to herself and to him.

Like many another, she had been caught in the stock market crash a few months before, and the savings of several years, rashly invested, had been wiped out. The year had been a lean one, financially, but unexpectedly rich in that it had brought into her life John Forbes, a young and still struggling attorney, for whom, however, those who knew him predicted a brilliant future.

She knew, by her woman's intuition, that he loved her. She knew also that a high sense of honor held him silent. He was well aware of Mansfield Proctor's devotion and of all that he had to offer the woman he married. John Forbes would not speak until he knew definitely whether or not she was going to marry Proctor.

When Lisle came home from the office she had found a letter from Frances, begging her to come to them for Christmas. "Just bring yourself, dear," she had written. "Not another thing. We will have a merry time with the kiddies and a tree, and we all want *you*." And Lisle was counting the cost of the trip and weighing it against possible modest gifts for the children at least.

Pride and love fought a sharp battle, but love won. She decided to take Frances at her word, and immediately ran out to the nearest telephone station and squandered from the slender contents of her purse the cost of a long distance call. Her sister's voice greeted her.

"Oh, Lisle, I'm so glad you're coming", she exulted. "It was so lonesome last Christmas without you. Anyone you'd like to bring with you?"

Lisle hesitated a second. Mansfield Proctor would have been glad of an invitation, but he had hosts of friends in the city, and his mother's house would be filled with guests. John Forbes, whose home was hundreds of miles away, would spend a lonely Christmas, especially if there were no chance of seeing Lisle,—that she knew,—and a sudden impulse made her say quickly, "Yes, Frances, a new friend of whom I told you, John Forbes. You'll all like him, I know. May I bring him?"

So it was settled, and the next two days passed in a whirl of preparation. John had insisted on a combined shopping trip, for he refused to go down entirely empty handed. The stores were open in the evenings, and, like two children, Lisle and John visited the toy counters of the least expensive shops, until they had a considerable number of mysterious parcels, which they found even more delight in wrapping and addressing.

Lisle was amazed that she still had money enough in her purse for the round trip and to carry her through the balance of the week until the next pay day.

They went down by bus on Christmas Eve. It was snowing lightly, and the evergreens that bordered the path to the house were powdered with white, turned to silver by the light of hidden bulbs. There were wreaths in the windows, which were all aglow, and as they came near they could catch glimpses of a tall gleaming tree, already bearing many-colored and strange fruits.

The door was flung open before they reached the steps, and they were swept inside in a whirl of welcome from Frances and the two kiddies. A moment later Richard came in, and instantly Lisle was

aware of an instinctive friendliness between the two men.

They finished trimming the tree that night, and Lisle lay long awake under the roof, looking with wide-open eyes out into the frosty night. It was so beautiful in the country after the noisy, smoky city. Only an hour's ride after all, and how wonderful it was to be in a real home again! The things which Mansfield Proctor had to offer her lost their significance, and at last she fell asleep with the face of John Forbes before her, as she had seen him carrying sleepy little Jean upstairs to her crib, and as he had looked into her eyes when he turned away and found her standing beside him. For a moment they had understood each other without the need of words, and Lisle's heart still sang at thought of it.

The next day was the happiest Christmas she had ever known. The youngsters were adorable in their childish glee, Frances and Richard were so openly happy with each other that Lisle found herself envying them. Could she and John find such happiness together, she wondered.

At last the day was over, the last carols were sung, the last stories told before the open fire, and Dicky and Jean had been carried off to bed to dream it all over again. Frances and Richard had gone out for an hour or so, and Lisle and John were alone for the first time since they arrived.

Late in the afternoon a telegram had come for John, but he had said nothing of its contents. Yet there was a certain new exultation in his look as if he had had unexpected good news, and Lisle felt sure he would tell her about it. But, to her surprise, he did not mention it. Instead he began telling her of his childhood, his home and his parents. He spoke briefly of the years of struggle in the city and of how lonely he had often been. Then suddenly he was telling her that he loved her, that he wanted to make a home for her as Richard had for Frances, that he wanted the chance to make her as happy as her sister was.

There were tears in Lisle's eyes when he had finished, but they were tears of joy, for she knew at last that she wanted nothing else so much in all the world as to be John Forbes' wife, and to stand by his side, sharing his struggles and his triumphs as the years went by.

When Richard and Frances returned they found them already making plans for an early wedding, and they insisted that they should be married in their home, where they had found their happiness. Richard even suggested that there was a very attractive little house near by, which could be bought or leased, and they decided to look it over before they returned to the city the next day.

After the congratulations were over and plans were partly made for the coming wedding, John pulled a telegram from his pocket and passed it to Lisle. It was an offer of a junior partnership in one of the best law firms in the city, for whom John had recently done an exceptionally brilliant piece of work. It was a splendid opportunity for advancement, and he had earned it. But in the hearts of the man and woman it was a thing of far less importance than the rich gift of love that Christmas had brought to them.—*Contributed.*

IMMANUEL

I.

I never think of God
As a God afar,
When He lifts His torch
To the first white star.
I never think of Him
As a spirit aloof,
When His kind rains dance
On my dark, wet roof.

II.

I never think of Jesus
As in Galilee,
When I wander on the shores
Of a gold rimmed sea.
I never think of Him
On a shining throne,
When I walk at high morning
In a wood, alone.

III.

I know a path
Where the hollyhocks nod;
And when I go there
I grow friendly with God.
And when young daffodils
Dance before my eyes,
I cannot think that Heaven
Is away in the skies.

IV.

I have a friend
Whose hands feel in mine
Like the very same hands
That turned water into wine.
And when, at the day's end,
I look in his face,
The whole wide world
Is a God filled place.

—*Wilson MacDonald.*

GREAT HYMNS OF THE CENTURIES

The hymn which is probably the most popular song in the English language is:

Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly.
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high;
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life be past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last!

This hymn was written by Charles Wesley in 1739, and was published before the first Methodist society was six months old. Stevenson, the historian, declares that the Lord of Glory bestowed on Wesley the high honor of composing the finest heart hymn in the English tongue.

Many consider Charles Wesley the finest hymn writer the Christian church has ever produced. Born in 1707 at the Epworth rectory of which his father, the Rev. Samuel Wesley, was incumbent, in 1728 he took his degree at Oxford, where he and a few others belonging to the Holy Club were first contemptuously called "Methodists." It was not, however, until May, 1738, that he experienced a real "change of heart", and a conscious knowledge of sins forgiven. This, then, was the real beginning of his mission as the singer of Methodism.

"I would rather", said Henry Ward Beecher, "have written that hymn of Wesley's—

'Jesus lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly',

than to have the fame of all the kings that ever sat on the earth. It is more glorious. It has more power in it."

No hymn writer of the Christian church has ever equalled Charles Wesley in portraying the various phases of experimental religion. In the 50 years from his conversion he wrote 6500 hymns. One which must be included in the list of 15 is "Oh, For A Thousand Tongues to Sing."

It is said that sometime before this hymn was written, the author was speaking to Peter Boehler, a pious Moravian minister, concerning his conversion and the sweet sense of pardon sealed on his conscience, adding, however—"But I suppose I had better keep silent about it." The good Moravian shook him by the hand and replied, "Oh, no, my brother, if I had a thousand tongues I would praise my Redeemer with them all!" Whereupon the poet went off and wrote—

O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise!
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace!
My gracious Master and my God,
Assist me to proclaim—
To spread through all the earth abroad
The honors of Thy name.

Charles Wesley was credited with the authorship of "Rock of Ages", but the true author was Augustus Toplady, a pronounced Calvinist. It appeared in 1776. William Gladstone thought enough of the hymn to translate it into Latin and Greek.

Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood
From thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save from wrath and make me pure.
Could my tears forever flow,
Could my zeal no lanquor know,
These for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou alone;
In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.

The hymn which has been called the "most inspiring and triumphant in the English language" is "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name", which was written in 1779. Its author was Edward Perronet, son of an English vicar.

An incident in the experience of the Rev. E. P. Scott, a missionary in India, is a wonderful testimony to the power of this hymn. He had gone to carry the gospel to a murderous inland tribe. He was met by a dozen pointed spears and death seemed inevitable. While they paused a moment he drew out his violin and, closing his eyes, began playing and singing this hymn:

All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let the angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
To crown His Lord of all!

When he had finished he opened his eyes and found that their spears had fallen and that they were all in tears. He remained with them many years, doing a great work.

A Bible passage was the basis for a soul-stirring hymn which is dear to the heart of Christians. In 1779 William Cowper, reading from Zachariah 13:3, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened . . . for sin and uncleanliness", write this song:

There is a fountain fill'd with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

The song of the missionaries is "From Greenland's Icy Mountains." Reginald Heber, a bishop of the Church of England, had gone to spend Whit Sunday with Dean Shirley, vicar of Wrexham, his father-in-law. On Saturday the dean asked him for some verses to use in closing his missionary service of the next morning. Heber at once withdrew to a window of the old vicarage and in a few moments had prepared this hymn:

From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand;
Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand;
From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Their land from error's gain.

Bishop Heber was the composer of many more hymns, among them that majestic ode: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty."

The song which might be called the national hymn is "America", written by Samuel Francis Smith in 1832. At a Fourth of July picnic in Boston it was sung for the first time.

My country 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing:
Land where my fathers died!
Land of the Pilgrim's pride!
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring!

One of the most widely sung funeral hymns is "Asleep in Jesus", suggested to the author, Margaret Mackay, by a tombstone inscription in England in 1832.

Asleep in Jesus! Blessed sleep,
From which none ever wakes to weep!
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes.

—*Boston Herald* (*To be Concluded*)

RECEDING HAIR LINE

Women do not often become bald at the crown of their heads as men do, but, with the passing years, their hair usually becomes scantier along the forehead and above the ears. Sometimes this receding of the hair line comes prematurely. The hairs first become very short and brittle. Then they lose their original color, often appear finer in texture and then become very scanty so that they no longer conceal the scalp.

Constantly curling of the front hair on heavy, tightly wound curlers that pull the hair may be the primary cause of the receding hair line. Too frequent curling with hot irons has a similar result. There are other factors that may enter into the situation also, for example, the failure to rinse soap away from the hair line after the face has been washed. The soap left on the hair day after day tends to make it break and gradually weakens and bleaches it.

The way the face is dried after washing may also harm the hairs at the hair line. Some people, especially men, wipe their faces vigorously, rubbing upward into the hair in a direction opposite to the way it grows. The hair naturally falls forward, and when it is rubbed the wrong way with a rough towel every day, it is no wonder that some of the hairs break.

While hard rubbing of hair is not good, scalp massage and brushing are necessary parts of the beauty program. In massage the fingers are braced firmly on the scalp which is rotated over the skull. The scalp should be loose so that it may be moved freely in this way. The short hairs around the hair line often fail to get as much brushing as the longer hairs do, and massage of the hair line may be neglected.

When the hair first begins to become scanty and shows a tendency to recede from the natural hair line, it is time to use a stimulating scalp tonic. The following may be applied three times a week before the massage; One dram tincture of cinchona, one dram tincture of rosemary, one dram Peru balsam, six drams castor oil and six drams bay rum.

Once a week apply an oily salve to the scalp at bedtime and shampoo next day. The salve may be made by mixing one dram precipitated sulphur with two ounces rose ointment. Shampoo with a mild soap like castile in liquid form or with a tar-liquid shampoo if the hair is dark. Be very careful to rinse out all traces of soap afterward.

When the hair has lost its color just around the temples and forehead, it may be touched up with some harmless coloring in the form of a pencil, paste or liquid. This sort of tint washes off when the hair is shampooed. Perhaps a more satisfactory way to handle the problem is to have the gray hairs tinted with a penetrating, nonpoisonous hair dye. Have an expert in hair dyeing do the touching up in order to secure the best results.—*Clipped.*

SOBERSIDES, AND THE ALL-ALONE KITTEN

Sobersides lay on the front steps of his master's house with his nose on his paws.

He was a mastiff, and his real name was Roger, but Tag, Rag, and Bobtail, the terriers who lived in the same street, called him "Old Sobersides" because he never barked, or fought, or chased things, as they did.

"What's the use of being so big if you don't make everyone afraid of you?" said Tag. "If I were as big and strong as that, I'd be awfully fierce—I would!"

"So would we," agreed the other two.

And now we are coming to the All-Alone Kitten.

He was so little and new that he hadn't even got a name; and he was very sad, because he had been carried off to live in a strange house, far away from his mother and his brothers and sisters.

At last he decided to run away home again. He went a long, long way—quite two streets—but he couldn't find the way back to the new house either—and then he knew that he was lost!

"And it's such a terribly big world", he sobbed, "for an All-Alone Kitten to be lost in. I should think he might never find himself again!"

Just then, Tag, Rag, and Bobtail came round the corner.

"Cat! Cat!" cried Tag—"No! Kitten! Come on, you dogs!"

The All-Alone Kitten was terribly frightened when he saw them coming. He ran as fast as he could to the nearest wall, sprang onto it, and jumped down on the other side —just in time.

He found himself in a strange garden. Across the grass, and round the corner he crept, stepping softly and carefully on his tiny paws. Then, suddenly he stopped, and his little heart went bumperty, BUMP, B U M P !

There was another dog—a great, big, monster of a dog, lying on some steps. (It was Sobersides).

"Oh, what shall I do?" thought the All-Alone Kitten. "Whatever shall I do? There are dogs everywhere!"

Just then Sobersides noticed him.

"Hullo!" said he, "I believe you must be our new kitten."

"I am—rather a new one"—whispered the All-Alone Kitten, "but I didn't know I was yours."

"Not mine exactly", said Sobersides, "but Mistress's. She told me there was going to be one. You'll like living here. Everyone is kind, and there's plenty to eat, and plenty of room to play in."

"B-but", stammered the All-Alone Kitten, "I n-never lived in a h-house with a dog before, and such a large dog."

Sobersides laughed his deep, growly laugh.

"Oh, you mustn't mind me", he said. "As if I would hurt a tiny little thing like you!"

"I thought", said the All-Alone Kitten, "that all dogs chased cats. There were three dreadful ones I met just now—"

"Oh, you needn't be afraid of them", said Sobersides. "They're all bark."

"Yes, there was a lot of bark", agreed the All-Alone Kitten. "I wonder", he added, "what I ought to do now?"

"That depends", said Sobersides. "Are you hungry?"

"Yes!"

"Well, come up here, then, and have a bit of dinner. There's plenty."

So the All-Alone Kitten actually had his dinner out of Sobersides' big bowl.

A little later Tag, Rag and Bobtail passed by, and peeped through the gate.

"Why!" cried Tag, "just look! There's that kitten asleep between Sobersides' paws."

"And he's not hurting him?" gasped Rag.

"Not a bit."

"We seem to have got it all wrong, you dogs", said Bobtail, thoughtfully. "Being awfully big and strong doesn't make you fierce—it makes you gentle."

—Christian Science Monitor.

CITY LIGHTS CONFUSE BIRDS

Scientists and lovers of birds are trying to prevent the great toll of bird life caused by lighted buildings and beacons in cities. During the annual spring and fall migrations, many species of birds fly by night, and, confused by lights over large cities, fly off their course, dash themselves against the buildings and are killed. Since birds are as often attracted as repelled by noises, the use of audible warnings is not practical. On a Chicago skyscraper an experiment is to be tried with a net so adjusted that the birds will be stopped before they strike the sides of the building.

CHRISTMAS WITH MOTHER

Gee! I'd like to be home on Christmas with
the folks that I love best,
They'll all be there, excepting me, in our
little old home out west;
Seems as though when Christmas comes and
I ought to be home with Mother
That something keeps me from going back,
—I hope I don't miss another.

When I think of the days of yesteryear the
tears come to my eyes,
And I see through the mist that lingers
there pictures I idolize;
As they pass in rapid succession there's one
that appeals to me,
It carries me back to childhood days—just
a kid at Mother's knee.

Mother taught me how to say my prayer,
"Now I lay me down to sleep,"
Then she'd pick me up and sing to me until
I was fast asleep;
If I had my way I would be there now, back
in my mother's arms
Having her sing me to sleep again while I
would gaze on her charms.

I wonder what mother would like me to give
her on Christmas day?
I know what I'll do—I'll surprise her, in-
stead of staying away;
I'll be on the job as big as life and hang
up my stockings "two",
And I'll bet old Santa Claus fills them both,
just like he used to do.

—*The Gideon.*

ARE YOU A GOOD SPORT?

A good sport is one who plays fair; one who is considerate; one who is generous; one who gives the other boy and girl or grown-up the same kind of "square deal" that he would like for himself.

A good sport wins fairly and loses gamely.

Are you a good sport?

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

Mrs. H. A. Stevens, Chairman, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.
Miss Ethel L. Hersey, Secretary, Hingham, Mass.
Miss Edith L. Jones, Treasurer, 65 Langdon Street, Cambridge, Mass.

ITS PURPOSE

To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, through the exchange of letters and by gifts of books and magazines.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To give to those living far from church some of the helps which churches give. One good sermon or similar article is printed in each number. These sermons are never doctrinal, but present only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed on by all churches.

WHERE TO WRITE

1. *Letters containing subscriptions to the paper,* fifty cents a year, should be sent to the Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks or postal orders should be made payable to the Cheerful Letter Exchange. Money from the Sunshine Bags is payable to the Treasurer.

2. *Letters asking for correspondents* should be sent to the Chairman, Mrs. J. A. McCaddin, 21 Ashfield Street, Roslindale, Mass.

3. *Letters asking for help in studying at home* should be sent to Mrs. Rachel J. Sands, Brimble Avenue, North Beverly, Mass.

The Home Study Committee has on hand a variety of schoolbooks which may be used by students either at home or in the schoolroom. The aim of the teachers is to help in any study where help is needed. Often this may fit a person for a higher grade of work.

4. *Letters about the establishment of Circulating Libraries* should be sent to Mrs. Henry R. Bowser, 20 Clark Road, Wellesley Hills, Mass.

Circulating Libraries have been established in isolated communities of twenty-seven States, where public libraries and other educational privileges are not available; also in many schools and colleges in rural and mountain districts. A Circulating Library will be started in any small community that is in need of one, if proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references given.

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